

REMARKS

The specification is amended to correct certain informalities. Claims 1, 19, 29 and 30 are amended. Claims 1-19 and 21-30 are pending. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications.

Applicant submitted a response to the Non-Final Office Action¹ on June 3, 2011. A Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment was sent on August 12, 2011. The present response addresses the concerns raised in the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment and responds fully to the pending Office Action. Specifically, the claims as amended by this response are directed towards the elected embodiments illustrated by Fig. 6. Moreover, the claims were amended based on the status of the claims as of the November 30, 2009 Response.

The specification stands objected to because the specification allegedly does not provide written support for the limitation of claims 27 and 28. The specification is amended to provide written support for limitations in claims 27 and 28, as suggested by the Office Action. No new matter has been introduced. As the Office Action points out, support for the limitations is found in Figure 1 of the drawings. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 11, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,774,615 to Lim et al. ("Lim") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,873,975 to Walsh et al. ("Walsh"), U.S. Patent No. 5,188,638 to Tzakis and U.S. Patent No. 3,357,432 to Sparks. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 19 recite an "inner sleeve [that] comprises two annular contact surfaces which are electrically connected to one another by way of connecting elements, wherein an annular contact surface is connected to an electrical supply cable"

According to the Office Action, Lim fails to teach inner and outer sleeves comprising electrically conductive materials. Notwithstanding the Office Action's hindsight reconstruction of

¹ Applicant's attorney contacted Examiner and confirmed that Office Action was Non-Final as classified or PAIR.

Applicant's claims with a total of three additional references,² Applicant respectfully submits that none of the cited references including Walsh, Tzakis, and Sparks disclose, teach, or suggest an "inner sleeve [that] comprises two annular contact surfaces which are electrically connected to one another by way of connecting elements, wherein an annular contact surface is connected to an electrical supply cable," as recited by claims 1 and 19.

Thus, claims 1 and 19 are allowable over the combination of Lim, Walsh, Tzakis and Sparks. Claims 2-4, 7-9, 11, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23, and 25 depend from claims 1 and 19 and are allowable at least for the same reasons. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lim in view of Walsh and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 3,435,823 to Edwards. The rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1 and are patentable over Lim and Walsh for at least the reasons mentioned above. Edwards does not cure the deficiencies of Lim and Walsh discussed above. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 12, 13, 16, 17, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lim in view of Walsh and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,649,937 to Bito et al. ("Bito"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 12, 13, 16, 17, and 22 depend from claims 1 and 19 and are patentable over Lim and Walsh for at least the reasons mentioned above. Bito does not cure the deficiencies of Lim and Walsh discussed above. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

² Applicant incorporates by reference its November 30, 2009 Response; specifically, the Office Action has failed to provide any rationale for the combination of four references to allegedly render the claims obvious. See November 30, 2009 Response at 11.

Claims 10, 24, and 26-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lim in view of Walsh and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,861,168 to Cooke et al. ("Cooke"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 10, 24, and 26-28 depend from claims 1 and 19 and are patentable over Lim and Walsh for at least the reasons mentioned above. Cooke does not cure the deficiencies of Lim and Walsh discussed above. Thus, claims 10, 24, and 26-28 are allowable over the Lim, Walsh, and Cooke combination.

Claims 29 and 30 both recite an "inner sleeve [that] further comprises two annular contact surfaces which are electrically connected to one another by way of connecting elements, wherein an annular contact surface is connected to an electrical supply cable" As discussed above, Lim and Walsh do not disclose or suggest at least these features. Cooke fails to cure the deficiencies of Lim and Walsh. Thus, claims 29 and 30 are also allowable over the cited combination. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

In view of the above, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 04-1073, under Order No. E7900.2001/P2001.

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Respectfully submitted,

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